



Shauntee Burns-Simpson

Pronouns: She, Her, Hers

Title: Director, Youth & Family Services

Organization: District of Columbia Public Library

City, State: Washington, DC

Type of Library: Public

ALA Membership Years: 23

Division Memberships: 23

Round Tables Memberships: 23

National Associations of Librarians of Color (NALCo) Memberships: 20

Spectrum Scholar: No

Emerging Leader: No

Prior Positions

Associate Director, Center for Educators & Schools, The New York Public Library 2022-2024

Associate Director, School Support & Outreach, The New York Public Library 2020-2022

Manager, School Support & Outreach, The New York Public Library 2018-2020

Degrees and Certifications

Queens College, MLIS, 2006; Long Island University, BFA Dance, 2001

ALA and/or ALA APA Activities

- ALA Councilor NALCos (BCALA) 2024-
- GNCRT President 2025-2026
- ALA Public Library Association Board 2025-
- Freedom to Read Foundation Board 2024-
- The Black Caucus of the American Library Association President 2020-2022
- ALA Committee on Diversity Chair 2016-2018

Offices held in state/regional library associations, and other associations

New York Black Librarians Caucus, President, 2014-2016

The New York Library Association, President of Reference & Adult Services Section, 2010-2012

Honors and Awards (library and non-library)

Queens College Alumna of the Year-2021

The New York Public Library Leadership Award- 2022

DEMCO/BCALA Award for Excellence in Librarianship- 2023

The Black Caucus of the American Library Association's Distinguished Service Award-2024

Major Accomplishments

Shauntee Burns-Simpson has demonstrated sustained, national leadership in librarianship through impactful initiatives, strategic partnerships, and field-wide influence. She supported the collaboration between the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (BCALA) and the Graphic Novels & Comics Round Table (GNCRT) to create the Black Literature Matters Comics Reading List, elevating Black voices and visual storytelling. She also helped broker a landmark partnership between BCALA and Netflix for the Bookmarks: Celebrating Black Voices series, expanding access to culturally affirming content. As President of BCALA during its historic 50th anniversary, she played a key role in milestone celebrations and helped plan the 11th National Conference of African American Librarians. During her tenure, she introduced Youth Literary Awards, strengthened the organization’s pipeline efforts, increased membership, and expanded the number of BCALA affiliates nationwide. Her work has been recognized, including receiving the New York Library Association’s Joseph F. Shubert Library Excellence Award for her leadership on the IMLS-funded HomeworkNYC initiative, which evolved into the Department of Education and Tri-Library collaboration MyLibraryNYC, now a model for school-library partnerships, nationwide impact.

Publications

Year	Citation
2020	Sittler, R. L., & Rogerson, T. J. (Eds.). (2020). <i>The library outreach cookbook</i> . Association of College & Research Libraries.
2022	<i>The Black librarian in America: Reflections, resistance, and reawakening</i> . Rowman & Littlefield.
2024	<i>Handbook of Black librarianship</i> (3rd ed.). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

Candidate Statement

I am honored to stand for election to the American Library Association Executive Board at a pivotal moment for our profession. Libraries are navigating unprecedented challenges—funding instability, book challenges, workforce burnout, rapid technological change, and deepening inequities—while remaining one of the most trusted civic institutions in our communities. I seek this role to help ensure ALA remains bold, responsive, and grounded in the lived realities of library workers and the communities we serve.

I currently serve as Director of Youth and Family Services at DC Public Library, where I lead systemwide strategy for early literacy, youth development, teen services, and community-based partnerships across diverse neighborhoods. My work centers on equity-driven service design and expanding access to learning opportunities beyond traditional library walls. I am particularly committed to ensuring libraries are recognized and resourced, as essential educational and social infrastructure.

My national service includes serving as President of the Black Caucus of the American Library Association (2020–2022), Chair of ALA’s Committee on Diversity, and as a current Trustee of the Freedom to Read Foundation. These roles have strengthened my governance experience and sharpened my understanding of policy, fiduciary responsibility, intellectual freedom, and the importance of principled leadership, especially in moments of public pressure and political scrutiny.

As a member of the Executive Board, I will advocate for:

- Sustainable investment in the library workforce, with particular attention to youth-facing roles, frontline staff, and leaders navigating burnout and expanding responsibilities.
- A strong and visible defense of intellectual freedom, including proactive support for libraries facing censorship, harassment, and legislative threats.
- Equity-centered decision-making, ensuring ALA policies, budgets, and initiatives reflect the needs of marginalized communities and the professionals who serve them.
- Strategic innovation, including thoughtful engagement with emerging technologies and data-informed approaches that enhance access without compromising trust or values.
- Transparent and inclusive governance, strengthening communication between ALA leadership, divisions, round tables, and members.

Throughout my career, I have been recognized as a change agent who builds bridges between policy and practice, national leadership and local impact, tradition and transformation. I believe the Executive Board must continue to listen deeply, lead courageously, and act decisively in support of libraries and library workers across the country.

I would be honored to serve ALA in this capacity and to bring my experience, integrity, and commitment to collective leadership to the Executive Board.

Links

<http://linkedin.com/in/shauntee-burns-simpson-411a09a>